644 788 431 The chief of the canton of Doulougou, where the prince is a guest for another week, also gives him beer, a sheep, a cow, a robe, and, finally, a wife.

At Bagamini, where he goes next, he receives from the canton chief a cow, a wife, a quiver, and arrows, presented with these significant words: "Ad locko la pema taon widi, laf ra taon neb'yé ti ya f'ba yemsé" (literally, "Take these arrows to shoot against horses and not against men, for the latter are your father's slaves and the country also belongs to him and therefore to you").

Seven days later he leaves Bagamini and goes to Ipelsé where he receives the same warm welcome. On leaving, he will take with him a cow and a wife.

He likewise remains at Ipelsé for seven days. Passing through Bedgo in the domain of the Peulh chief, the Djiba Naba chooses the finest [104] bull from the herd of cattle which must be presented to him. He likewise takes a girl from the chief's household who becomes his property. He then goes on to Guirgo where he is guest of the canton chief for a whole week. On his departure he receives a cow, a robe, and a wife from the chief.

The inhabitants of the village of Kakamsé, through which the Djiba Naba merely passes, bring him quantities of millet cakes (sagbo) and a gift of their choice (a sheep, a goat, a cow, cowries, beer, etc.).

The crown prince continues on to Kondrin and remains there for three days. In addition to sagho and dam, the chief of Kondrin is required to offer him a cow and a wife before his departure.

From there he proceeds to Béré where the chief, called Rimbissi Kasma (the oldest descendant of the Mogho Naba), gives the Djiba Naba a cow, a robe, and a wife and acts as his host for a week.

644 788 824 During the night of the seventh day, the notables of the canton of Djiba come to Béré to look for the naba. He allows himself to be led away, accompanied by only a single servitor and a groom. The rest of the escort from Ouagadougou remains behind and follows him the next morning (1).

1. Why this departure at night and seeming escape? On the route leading into his

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dominion, the Djiba Naba must pass under a tree whose branches he should be able to touch since he is on horseback. His whole future depends upon his doing so. It is from this day forward that the prince will have a long life and will succeed his father. It is believed that the tree has magical powers and that its branches will withdraw of their own accord as the prince passes by if, even though he is the emperor's eldest son, he is not the successor designated by Wendé (God).

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[105] In advance of his coming, care has been taken to find a nice dwelling suitable to house a prince who is the emperor's eldest son. With this in view, an establishment has been chosen which is well built and fairly large, one belonging to a dakangré (prosperous man), and His Highness is conducted to it. As soon as the Djiba Naba has dismounted, his involuntary host must leave his home and take shelter with one of his neighbors. He takes great care to gather all his property, money (liguidi) and wives, into one part of the house; the rest henceforth belongs to the naba. Indeed, it is not long before the establishment is enlarged and some of the huts demolished to make way for more sumptuous buildings.

As soon as the prince is installed, the displaced host receives some gifts and wives as a kind of indemnity for loss. A suitable house is built for him a few hundred meters away.

For several days, celebrations are the rule throughout the canton of Djiba. All the notables and village chiefs, including neighboring canton chiefs who have not had the honor of receiving the prince, come to pay their respects to the new naba and to bring him large gifts.

The escort from Ouagadougou is then sent back [106] with many gifts. The most important nayirdamba [court dignitaries] receive wives and clothing.

Besides the wives the Djiba Naba may have had before his appointment, it is to be noted that he collected quite a harem

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that he did not cause his father's death. The daughters who dare go through the opening, even those who are grown women, are greeted with bravos by the crowd. The wives receive generous gifts from their husbands. The reason for this is that no girl who had been pregnant before being led to her husband would dare to pass through the opening because the deceased and other kimsé (ancestral spirits) would strike her dead.

This is why some women disappear at the crucial moment, to the great shame of their husbands.

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The funerary hut is fumigated by burning a certain aromatic plant known as sompiga. The Bambara and the Wolof call it benguefala or benguefira. The same plant was widely used by the Europeans during the recent outbreak of yellow fever, either in an infusion, in a tisane, or mixed with the shower water.

of chickens which are killed at his feet. He pronounces some ritual words which may be summarized as follows: "Accept these chickens and these cowries and do not return; may everything you leave behind profit your heirs!;" etc.

The body is then carried away. On reaching [197] the tomb, the bearers carry the corpse around it three times and then place the body on the ground. The undertaker goes into the tomb and arranges the sleeping place. The mat is removed, and the body is handed in to him. The members of the family and other relatives at once begin to weep as the opening is closed with a stone, and the whole is covered with earth.

The eldest daughter of the deceased and his wives cover their bodies with ashes. The pugtiéma (first wife) and the eldest daughter wrap leafy branches around their waists, and the rest of the family wear vines on their foreheads. This is the first mourning.

Forty or fifty days later the second funeral ceremony is held, accompanied by various games, the playing of tom-toms, killing

342 is continued, and the process goes on until the hut is completed, that is, when it reaches a height of about 1.65 meters. The house is built without any openings, but when the walls are up, a [219] low door is put in, having the shape of a pointed arch. The interior of many Mossi houses is divided by a low wall, called kogré, which makes the hut very dark. A few small holes are made with the handle of a daba, and these, with the low door, are [726] the only openings. In time of war, the Moaga used to shoot his arrows through these tiny holes. Before the roof is put on, the [751] walls are daubed with wet ashes, a practice which is supposed to guarantee good health for the new inhabitants.

The roof is conical in shape. It is made with poles which are tightly tied at the top with vines. Stiff mats, zarsé, are placed on the poles. They are held in place with fibers and are covered with braided straw. Some twenty persons are needed to put up the roof. The construction of the house is then finished. Only the plastering remains to be done. For this job, the women collect a special kind of earth, boalga, which they mix with manure from cows or horses and then coat the walls with it. When this operation is completed, the women cover the floor with a ferruginous material that is sprinkled with water and tamped down with bits of flat wood called silpama. After the floor has been smoothed down, the sasgo is the next step. This involves covering the surface with a sticky material, boudou, mixed with ground charcoal. This is rubbed over and over with glass sherds or special stones called sassega. The shiny black surface obtained in this fashion prevents the ferruginous material from soiling the family's clothes. Some [824] people sprinkle the finished floor with kanmé, an infusion made of the skin of the néré fruit, in order to make it wear well.

[220] Construction workers. The master of the house is aided by his own brothers and other relatives in the same clan. He does not request help from outsiders. The women's job is to get the water needed for the mortar.

The earth used in building is taken from a hole near the house, the tan-nako (from tando, "earth," and nako, "hole"). This excavation is later filled with all the waste from the house and ordure from the courtyard. The tan-nako, well fertilized in this manner is planted with maize, and this field is called the kamanga.

312 hour for the impurities and the residue to settle to the bottom of
271 the vessel. Then the water is poured off into another container and is ready to be used for drinking or cooking.

[824] (b) It is also possible to use an additive known as missim (crushed tamarind leaves). The water becomes clear, but it is, of course, somewhat sour. Although it may be drunk, it is
[252] ideally suited to cooking since the Mossi add missim (from miki, "to make sour") even to the water of springs and wells before they use it to prepare their principal food, sagbo.

744 In the town of Ouagadougou frequent visits by the sanitary
312 officers remind the natives of the necessity of keeping fresh water in their containers. They are also encouraged to fill in during the winter the low places holding water where mosquitoes might breed.

515 Laundering. There is no doubt [231] that the Moaga is care-
296 less about the cleanliness of his clothing. There is no shortage of soap -- karite butter, of which it is made, is plentiful -- but he believes that frequent laundering will wear out his clothes too quickly. He also thinks -- which is childish -- that the dirtier a garment is, the cleaner it will wash. He thinks it completely ridiculous for clothes to be ironed. It must be admitted that among the Mossi only a married man can require his wives to wash his clothes. A mother also takes care of her children's clothes, but a bachelor is forced to wash his own things. This, we think, explains the extreme negligence shown by some of them
[461] who let their clothes get dirtier and dirtier. Indolence, alas, is one of the dominant defects of the native of Mossi country.

514 Toilet arrangements. In general the Mossi have no regular latrines. Men, women, in short, everyone, simply goes into the bush. The only exception is the very young children who take care of their needs on the threshold. At night, especially during the winter when the grain is fairly tall, grownups themselves go to the kamanga or karaga (millet or maize field near the living quarters).

364 When the town of Ouagadougou was made a mixed commune [Ed., smallest French territorial subdivision, with both French and native representation in the municipal council], it was possible to install, at municipal expense, a number of lavatories in certain

776 753 makes noise in the bush under certain leafy trees, his cheeks will swell out. The tisé talk, even during the day. It is their voices which are heard when the wind stirs the leaves. We had /81/ papaw seeds planted all around our dwelling. They had sprouted and grown well; the fruit was already ripening. One morning, no papaw trees were left in [824] Koupéla! The naba had decreed that these were talking trees, that they would cause illness to those who had them in their soukala ... and the papaws had been cut down!

776 782 Fortunately, it is possible to protect oneself against the tisé. First, those trees which shelter them may be felled, and the spirits will move elsewhere. Some very beautiful trees vanish thus from the villages. The tisé may also be appeased with sacrifices. Does this result in tree cult, dendrolatry? Indeed not! The Mossi clearly make the distinction between the tree and the spirit that inhabits it, and they sacrifice to the spirit. Sometimes also, a tree was planted on the [769] grave of the elder who founded the village, and sacrifices are made to the ancestral spirit at the foot of the tree. Finally, there are fetishes more powerful than the tisé. It is enough to know which roots and barks the tisé do not like, to steep them in water, and to place the pot at the door of the hut. When a tiga sees this fetish, he invariably runs away. Some Peul are said to have the power to distinguish between those trees where spirits dwell and those where they do not, and to kill the former trees merely by rubbing them with butter! This must be done in a special way.

776 754 The kikirsi are imps, red or black all over, and only a few centimeters high. Their body has the same shape as ours, but it is much nimbler and more tenuous—something ethereal and impalpable that only the sorcerers can discern. The latter call them with a low whistle or by shaking a peculiarly shaped gourd that looks like a handle [534] ending in a sphere. This gourd is dried without being opened, and the seeds gather in the sphere. The sorcerer makes noise by shaking this instrument, and the kikirsi flock to him singing.

776 There are good and evil kikirsi, and the good ones only do evil when forced to do so; for instance, when someone puts pepper in their sauce. They abhor pepper but they love honey, and every good housewife who wishes to preserve her honey covers it carefully with pepper to prevent the kikirsi from eating it. They are inordinately fond of sesame, and they dote on millet cakes (samsa); every woman who makes millet cakes offers them a few. People who eat samsa while walking are careful to drop a few crumbs to the ground. On the

5: Hammond E-5 (1954-1956) 1959
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belonging to him, he can be relied upon to share with the members of the lineage if this should be necessary.

Capital goods in the form of houses, granaries, and fields are the property of the lineage. Individual rights are limited to temporary use and custodianship but are passed on to others when a general shift in residence and role follows the death of a senior member of the lineage. Although property is passed on in accordance with the rules of descent in the lineage, part of the property redistributed represents the product of the labor of the lineage as a consanguineal kin group. For, as has been indicated, the labor of the wives, who are not lineage members, is as important as that of their husbands and children.

The lineage head discusses the coming year with the other elders, and an over-all production plan is made out. They decide what fields are to be left fallow, what ones are to be planted to cotton and the varieties of millet, what lands may be used by individuals desiring to plant a cash crop, and what, if any, land may be loaned to neighboring lineages or to in-laws. With the approach of the first rains, all economically active men and women go to their fields to prepare them for planting, leaving behind in the village only the old people and the children who are still too small to assist in the fields or tend their fathers' animals.

A considerable portion of the land within the limits of a Mossi village is under the direct control of the village chief (*Tenga Naba*) and the earth custodian (*Tenga Soba*), the local representatives of political and supernatural authority. This land is used for the public way, for the market place, and for burial grounds and latrines. Except for that which is too poor for any purpose, all available land within several miles of a village is put under cultivation.

Ki is the generic name which the Mossi give to the millet, which is the basic product in their economy and which receives the largest single allocation of land and labor of any Mossi economic activity. Two kinds of millet are planted, a large-grained variety (*kenda*) and a small-grained variety (*kazua*). Millet is the first crop to be planted after the rains have begun. Small- and large-grained millet seeds are frequently mixed and sown in the same field. Small-grained millet may also be sown in the same field with a white bean (*benga*). A "tired" field may be left fallow for five, ten, or fifteen years. When it is first replanted, it will be seeded to millet for the first three years. The fourth year it may again be put into millet, but if the previous crop was not good, cotton will be planted. Usually, a Mossi farmer plants cotton for two years, millet for three, then groundnuts, more cotton, then two more years of millet. It is believed that cotton renews the soil because of the intensive cultivation required: the earth is brought up into hillocks and turned over; after picking, the plant may be turned under and left to enrich the soil.

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time. "Waraga," which means "first cultivation," is the name given to the fifth. The sixth, which appears in early September or late August, is called "Baca," meaning "second cultivation."

If the millet is not yet ripe for harvest at the appearance of the seventh moon, it is also called "Baca," since the work of cultivation must continue. This choice rests with the chief of the village of Room. The entire Mossi kingdom waits for his decision to know whether the ceremonial cycle called "Basga," which closes the economic year, is to begin or whether the harvest and its attendant ceremonies are to be put off for another month. Just behind his residence is a sacred millet field whose grains, as they mature, contain an aspect of the souls (*riim shiise*) of the dead kings of the Yatenga. When the millet in this field is ready to be cut, the next moon to appear is called "Yalem," and the ceremonial cycle which closes the economic year is begun. In the early days of the Yatenga dynasty millet from this field was used to prepare a sacrificial gruel to propitiate the deceased rulers of the newly established kingdom. When it is cut today, a first portion is taken to the altar at Room dedicated to the souls of these early kings. Two other bundles of millet are prepared from the same field. One is sent to the *Yatenga Naba* at Ouahigouya, who is the living descendant of the dead kings. The other is sent to the village of Gourcy, the former capital and the first residence of the founder of the Yatenga dynasty, Naba Yadiga.

The emissaries to the two political centers are accompanied by young people who break off stalks of millet from the fields along their way, adding these to the bundles of grain so as to include all of the farmers of the Yatenga in this offering which symbolizes the dependence of the Mossi on the benevolence of the souls of the dead kings and their living descendant. The millet taken to Ouahigouya is sacrificed at the palace altar of the former rulers. Part of the millet sent to Gourcy is sacrificed at the altar of the spirits of the former village chiefs (*nakom shiise*); the other part is sacrificed at the shrine of the former kings. At Ouahigouya and Gourcy a portion of each sacrificial offering of millet is returned to Room with stalks from the local crop at each place. These are used to make a final sacrifice symbolizing the interdependent relationship of Mossi religious, economic, and political organizations. The ceremonial cycle serves to demonstrate the reliance of the people on the benevolence of the spirits of their former kings for their social, economic, and supernatural well-being.

A ceremony called "Kom Filiga" follows. Meaning "water thanksgiving," it is the occasion for thanking the Mossi ruler, the *Yatenga Naba*, for the wise direction of affairs which has permitted the farmers to cultivate their fields in peace. All village and canton chiefs travel to Ouahigouya to salute their king and rededicate themselves to his service.

000 nigérien /The Central Nigerian Plateau/, pages 275 and 276.)

782 776 The Mossi sacrifice to evil spirits (kinkirga in the singular, kinkirsi in the plural). In Mossi villages, when the cold weather begins, the oldest man in the village performs a sacrifice to avert the wrath of evil spirits. These are indeed fearsome, for among other things they cause the storms, the fierce winds that lay flat the millet and maize. Those spirits usually live in the bush and inhabit [824] in particular the kankalra trees (lenga in Mandé), to which the Mossi offer sacrifices but whose leaves they nevertheless eat. There are Mossi who can see the kinkirsi and who have fights with them.

791 Now, let us say a word about the priestly organization of the Mossi.

/591/ First of all, among the Mossi as among other Blacks, there are soothsayers and makers of grigris. The soothsayers are called bara and the grigri makers timisoba, meaning "grigri chiefs," from timi, "grigri" and soba, "chief." This is exactly the same word formation as that of basitigui in Bambara.

Prior to the French occupation there were considerable numbers of bara among the Mossi, at least one for every village. Since the arrival of the Whites, however, they are much fewer. The bara dis- [787] close things with the aid of some earth. Since they only charge a few cowries for a consultation, they till the soil during the winter season and even work at a trade during the dry season, for example at shoemaking or weaving. They teach the bara's calling to their children.

791 789 The timisoba, although less numerous than the bara, do not make a living by making grigris either. They, too, till the soil and work at a trade. They only make grigris on order and do not make them up in advance.

The timisoba goes into the bush and cuts out the roots of certain trees. He burns them and puts the charcoal in bags which he hangs either inside or outside his hut. This charcoal is or becomes grigri. In order to make other objects into grigris, he reduces the charcoal to powder, mixes it with karité butter, and marks with it all the objects he wishes to make into grigris, such as cow's tails, deer horns, sheep horns, etc. This charcoal powder is put to all sorts of uses. The timisoba even mixes it with his millet flour and eats it.

304 824 752 881 At the end of three days, the nané sends a few circumcised boys of preceding years, rasamba, to look in the bush for bark of the néré, karite, n'pékou, and the n'kouna trees. He has them boiled in a large canari and then allows the water to cool until it is lukewarm. Then he calls the bankonsé (this is the name of the newly circumcised boys in Mossi, bankonka in the singular, bankonsé in the plural) and orders them to wash their penes in this water. At the same time he has the leaves of the kantoboga boiled. This is an aloe-type plant of which we have already spoken /not translated/. When this washing is done, the bankonsé smear their penes with cow butter (karite butter is avoided because it is believed to soften the penis and to make it less virile), and then, after cutting kantoboga leaves into pieces, they wrap them around the member, forming a sort of sheath. These leaves are wrapped with cotton thread so they will stay in place. /260/

From then on, the same procedure is repeated every morning and every evening. The bankonsé undo the bandage, wash with néré or karite water, apply fresh butter and new kantoboga leaves. This is done until the wounds are healed.

Néré water, once prepared, keeps for seven days. The supply of kantoboga leaves is renewed only when there are no more on hand.

304 883 881 The bankonsé do not stir for the first three days. From the third to the tenth day, they begin to take a little exercise. For example, they fetch whatever water they need. At the end of ten days, they walk about in the bush, fetch firewood which they stack in piles, and do the same with straw. In the open country they chase hares, rats, and snakes with sticks, in short, all the small game which is to be found there. When there is water in the vicinity, they fish for frogs and fish. They also pick berries from bushes, etc.

[292] Their clothing consists of a kind of skirt which goes down to their ankles and which is made of old garments torn to shreds, of frayed cotton bands.

In the evening from time to time the bankonsé have tom-tom sessions near the shed where they sleep in the village. The griot /drummers, minstrels/ come and play on their instruments. Since this is done at night, men, women, and children may attend.

304 435 881 The bankonsé are entitled to ransack the bush and to take everything they find: chickens, goats, sheep, cotton, etc. The owners have no right to object, but this applies only to small livestock. The bankonsé have no right to larger animals and horses.

11: Skinner E-5 (1955-1957) 1964
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posted to alert the troops in case the enemy should attempt an attack at dawn. If the war was waged against foreigners, individual soldiers were allowed to keep a slave or a cow out of the booty; the remainder was divided between the district chiefs and the central government. In victorious civil wars against the enemies of the Mogho Naba, however, the entire booty was sent to the capital.

When the Mossi had to defend their own territory, their most common tactic was to evacuate the villages. This was the technique most often employed against invading French forces.[29] Other defenses included palisaded villages, barricades of fallen trees, trenches, and hedges, some with poisoned foot traps. Mangin reports that the Boulsa were defeated in their war with Fada-N'Gourma not only because their enemies fought valiantly, but also because they "were favored by very propitious terrain covered with thorny scrub, behind which the besieged men took cover to shoot on the Mossi."[30] Mangin does not say whether the scrub was poisoned, but his data indicate that this type of defense was common in the area. The Mossi say that the use of poisoned prickly plants (*silenage*) against invading forces dates back to the early conquest of the territory. Tradition recounts that Naba Oubri was unable to conquer Ouagadougou until his Ninisi wife advised him to shoe his soldiers against the poisoned foot traps of the aborigines.

Mossi wars or raids were usually limited to the dry season and stopped at the beginning of the planting season. Commenting on the war between Boulsa and Fada-N'Gourma, Mangin tells us: "This was during the dry season. Thirst completed what the courage of the Gyekango people had begun, and many Mossi perished."[31] Tradition recounts that it took Mogho Naba Waraga five successive years of attack before he defeated Ramzi, the rebellious chief of Riziam principality. He finally defeated him when his army attacked the province before its people had been able to harvest their crops and retire into an impregnable fortress for the dry season. Judging by the reports of European visitors, this type of dry-season warfare continued as late as the 1890's. For example, Crozat could not understand why the Mogho Naba did not send an army to defeat the chief of Lalle district, who had imprudently raided a village near Ouagadougou, and he concluded that the ruler did not have an army. The fact is, however, that Crozat was in Ouagadougou between September 9 and September 30, a period when the potential soldiers of the Mogho Naba had not yet harvested their crops. Had Crozat remained in Mossi country for three or four months longer, he would have seen the ruler's army in action; for, as a matter of fact, the Lalle Naba's attack on Mogho Naba Wobogo was but the latest episode in a prolonged struggle between the two rulers.

11: Skinner E-5 (1955-1957) 1964
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000 19. There is a curious story among the people of Nobere district that Mogho Naba Mottoba (who reigned in the seventeenth century) was not a Mossi but a Fulani who was given the nam after he chanced upon the installation ceremony and assassinated the newly elected man during the night. This story is denied in Ouagadougou; in fact, it contradicts the genealogical records of the ruling dynasty. However, the genealogy does show that Mottoba's father, Mogho Naba Guiliga, had succeeded his brother, and it is possible that there was dynastic rivalry for the nam between Mottoba and the former Mogho Naba's son. [174]

20. This rite was performed during the installation of the present Mogho Naba of Ouagadougou, although it is hardly recognizable as described in *Newsweek* (December 9, 1957, p. 48): "A man named Moussa Congo assumed the name of Kougri Naba last week and became the 35th Mogho Naba of the Mossi in the capital city of Ouagadougou in the Upper Volta region of French West Africa. Son of Emperor Issoufou Congo, Kougri Naba, as the new Mogho Naba, has one white horse, 200 wives, and 8,000 warriors, who danced around his palace ten times."

21. This practice has apparently lapsed since Mogho Naba Kougri moved into the modern concrete palace built for his father, Mogho Naba Sagha II. [182]

22. Tauxier, *Le Noir du Soudan*, pp. 569-70. Tauxier claims the Mogho Nanamse used the pages for homosexual purposes on Fridays in order to circumvent the Moslem prohibition against intercourse with women on this holy day. Homosexuality is rare among the Mossi, as Tauxier himself admits, and most Mossi deny that the Mogho Nanamse ever resorted to it. However, one respondent did state that he had heard about homosexuality among certain past rulers. [838]

23. Crozat, p. 4849.

24. When Mogho Naba Kom II died under mysterious circumstances in 1942, it was rumored that he had committed suicide rather than reduce the number of his wives as ordered by the administration under the influence of the Catholic missionaries. Kom allegedly held that no one can inherit a sovereign's wife during his lifetime. Therefore, in order to avoid loss of status by seeing his wives go to commoners, he chose death so they would be inherited by nobles. [648] [762] [797]

25. The statement in *Newsweek* (December 9, 1957, p. 48) that Kougri has two hundred wives is untrue. [114]

26. Intermarriage between the Mossi and the Fulani has produced a people known as the Simili-Mossi. Nevertheless, the Mossi are strongly prejudiced against the Fulani, especially against the women, stating that the Moaga who has sexual intercourse with a Fulani woman must bathe in nine different rivers before he becomes clean. The basis of this prejudice appears to be that Fulani women are not cultivators and therefore are unacceptable as Mossi wives. [563]

27. Mossi women know a great deal about the history and traditions of their people. But they never indicate that they do except during such rituals, when they are required to play certain roles.

28. Dim Delobson, p. 96.

29. Dim Delobson (p. 101) states that there are "sacred things" in this village, but I have been unable to substantiate his report.

30. Dim Delobson (p. 104) gives the classic explanation of this nighttime ride. On his ride from Bere to Djiba, the mounted prince must try to touch a certain branch of a certain tree. If he is destined to succeed his father, he will succeed in touching the branch; if he is not, the branch will magically withdraw at his approach. [324]

I visited the area in which this ritual reportedly took place, but the people in the vicinity denied that such a tree existed.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 106.

32. IFAN (Compte Rendu No. 429). There are many other rumors concerning Kom's death. In a book praising the loyalty of the Africans to the Free French Gov- [648]